1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

Before

Easter the wife whitewashes the house, the wall around the yard, and the oven, even pressing her husband into service should this be necessary. She strings tobacco leaves in late summer; she also strings peppers and onions to hang under the eastern eaves or on the door post. After the shearing is done in the spring, she is anxious to get the wool washed and hung up to dry in festoons around the yard; she dries beans on a blanket out in the yard or, if she lives in Southern Greece or the islands, uses the cement cover of the cistern for the beans as well as for drying figs and almonds.

The so-called home or house animals — one or two sheep or goats, which are often petted, and the donkey — are under her supervision much of the time, although the man on his way to the fields may take the smaller animals with him and stake them out to graze. The women also have full responsibility for poultry except around Attica, where commercialized poultry raising also absorbs the attention of the men. Caring for the swine and a family cow, should there be one, is a woman's job. But the men will assume responsibility for a herd of cows, a flock of sheep, the oxen, or any horses. When new homes are built, special stables for these animals are provided in the yard. The women are busy, as would be rural women anywhere, when a pig is slaughtered. As a matter of fact, every member of the family usually participates in some stage of the proceedings, looking upon it as a gala occasion, more fun than work.

Although gardening is looked upon as woman's work, the man usually prepares the soil and leaves the planting and cultivation up to the woman. Nor is he apt to help when his daughter goes out with a neighbor woman to gather acorns for the pigs, even though it means that one of the women has to spend most of the afternoon up in the trees shaking down the acorns to the woman below.

Woman's participation in field work is gradually changing throughout much of Greece. In Polygyros, the chief city in the Chalkidike Peninsula, the men proudly point out — as they do in Crete — that women do not work in the fields. More and more the men are taking over the field work and the cutting of wood, in which they formerly expected the women to help. One still will see many women out in the fields chopping cotton or planting rice, with a man — apparently directing them — sitting down in the shade. As the Bishop of Messenia pointed out, many of the women working in the field are widows, or their husbands are away at work, at the market, or perhaps sick. He thought that the Greek women working their own land were better off than American women employed in factories, although the Bishop did not know that one third of the Greek labor force insured under sickness and pension plans (which means paid employees covered by government regulation) was made up of women.[12] At harvest time, too, the women wield their sickles day in and day out in areas where the mechanical harvesters

1:Sanders Z-5 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

TABLE 4. AGE OF MARRIAGE IN TEN GREEK VILLAGES
(about 1951)

Village location	Age for men	Age for women
Near Veroia	From 18 and over; median age, 22.	From 17 and over; median age, 20.
Near Lamia	Age differences play a minor role due to heavy emphasis upon financial arrangements.	Women should be 18 before marriage.
In Macedonia	Between 20–25, even before completing military service.	From 18–22. At 25 girl is an old maid.
In Macedonia	Usually after 23. Men wait until they finish military service. Shortage of women here so men marry girls from two nearby villages.	From 18–25. In some cases girls under 18 elope. After 26, girl is an old maid.
Near Serrai	No information.	From 17–25, but usually around 20. After 25, girl is an old maid.
In Grammos	Serve in army first and marry older.	18 and above; at 25 girl considered old.
In Central Greece	After 25 when completing military service.	Can marry at 16, but usually do so at 20.
Near Agrinion	Complete army service and marry about 30.	From 21–25, seldom before 20. Old maids after 30.
Near Mesolongi	Cannot marry if they have unmarried sisters near their own age.	No strong restrictions about age.
Near Mesolongi	Generally complete military service. In 43 families studied, 30 unmarried men were 20–37.	Average age, 23. In 43 families studies, 14 unmarried women were 20–50.

Source: Village studies conducted by Near East Foundation, Greek Ministry of Agriculture, and United States Mission to Greece.

people get a chance to see each other at a fountain, on the street, or at some festival dance, although any conversation may still have to be surreptitious. Other social events where boys and girls meet occur at the beginning of the wheat harvest, the gathering of grapes, and the harvesting of olives. But once a few more daring young people have successfully flaunted the

1:Sanders Z-5,N (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

As a final note on courtship and marriage, it is proper to ask what happens if a marriage does not turn out successfully for either or both parties. Until about twenty years ago a divorce was never thought of as a possibility by peasants; indeed, they considered even the thought of it a disgrace to a family. Even today, when so many changes are present in Greek life, village divorces are still relatively rare. When they do occur, the divorcée has a hard time getting another husband, for the relatives of any prospective mate are afraid that she might start to lead a bad life and bring shame on them. In some villages where there is considerable urban influence, the idea of getting a divorce is tied in with the newer conception of women's rights, and in this connection it is not viewed as a matter of shame but as a matter of fashion. A woman who wishes to stand on her legal rights begins to talk in terms of divorce in case she thinks her husband is abusing her.

As in the case of the divorcée, the fate of the widow is much more difficult than that of the widower. The widow, if she is dutiful, observes a long period of mourning which keeps her out of circulation in the marital market; also, she is in competition with a surplus number of unmarried women who are apt to be preferred. In any event, she must have a dowry to contribute to her new husband. Under some circumstances, such as having children who are the pride and joy of their paternal grandparents, she may stay on in her deceased husband's home. If she does not meet a functional need there, but is an extra mouth to feed, she will try to arrange for her own relatives to take her back.

1:Sanders Z-5N (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

[P. 176]

IX

Ceremonies and Holy Days

593 182 Greek family life also has its serious overtones. In such a closely knit unit the illness or death of a member may be more keenly felt than in a family system where one's own security is not so closely tied in with the fate of the others. In a society such as rural Greece, where there is so little [589] room for the unmarried woman, the task of finding a suitable husband for a daughter or sister can become an overriding consideration coloring all of life's relationships. Where the family is the economic and producing unit, economic ups and downs are intimately geared with the ups and downs of the family. Should the bond between husband and wife become strained, [369] the home increasingly becomes the center of tension with fewer outlets than exist in an urban setting. In such cases, the man stays around the house as little as possible and the wife seeks the company of the neighboring women or of some relatives.

Fortunately for all, just when home life has become a bit ruffled, some ceremony or holiday appears to make the family forget for a while their differences in order to carry off the ceremony with the proper flair. The housewife can immerse herself with good conscience in the time-consuming preparations; the father knows that certain duties are exclusively in his domain; and the children wait expectantly for their cues from the adults so that they, too, may participate.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

476 branches) from the hillsides to the house. But the most frequently described and the most romantic arrangements are the *nychteria,* or the groups of 573 women who work together in the evening:

> In the nychteria women help each other finish lighter types of work such as carding, the breaking and cleaning of almonds, cornhusking, kneading of ring biscuits, and the like. In these nocturnal pursuits in certain places customs are strict and men are strictly forbidden to participate. Because this type of work is housework and is carried out in the late hours of the day, it usually takes the form of a social gathering. Drinks and roasted chickpeas are offered, jokes are told, games are played, stories and anecdotes are told, and there is singing and dancing.[1]

[562] [574] [535] [533]

[372] Once in a while this dancing may last until dawn. In the summertime, especially, the women gather in the village lanes and spin by the light of the moon or a torch of resinous wood.

476 When a woman, whose husband is dead or off in the army, needs help which no kinship group can provide, she will go to the head of some other family and say: "My son has gone into the army. I have only daughters. If you will help me in man's work my daughters will help you." They then become *kollegoi* (colleagues or partners) and carry out the agreed-upon obligations.

[589]

These examples are not intended to cover the wide range of mutual-aid activities, but they serve to highlight their main features. Fishermen have numerous arrangements for helping one another; farmers may rent a field and work it jointly, or even own olive or nut trees in common. In general, these mutual-aid arrangements are viewed as quite different from landlord-tenant contracts which occurred in many forms before the land redistribution in the 1920s. Those tied together in mutual-aid agreements think of themselves as coequal and not as superior and subordinate partners. Nor do these mutual-aid traditions ordinarily apply to cases where money alone is given as full payment for services received. Instead, they make it possible for villagers to meet many of their important needs without having to pay money for services rendered. The mutual-aid practices discussed here differ also from what might be called philanthropy or deeds done for "the good of the soul" which will be looked at more closely in connection with the villager's religion.

[226] [241] [422]

[157] Beyond any question, there is a strong strain of cooperation even among the individualistic Greeks. Although somewhat overidealized, the following comment by T. K. Papaspyropoulos about his Peloponnesian village portrays the essence of mutual aid there:

> When somebody gets sick everybody goes to visit him and look after him. When a young girl gets married all the village goes and helps. When they sow, plow, winnow, or do any other village tasks one person helps the other.

1:Sanders Z-5,Y (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

000
548
589
prostitution are found in villages. One or more women with "loose morals" may live in the village and be visited by the men. In the town or city the person who introduces village girls into prostitution is apt to be a fairly young widow who seeks this as a means of support.

3. William Miller, *Greek Life in Town and Country* (London, 1905), p. 93.

184
197
4. Around Phlorina, in western Macedonia, boys marry older girls, since fewer women are available. This is a Slavic-speaking area where the women work more in the fields. In most Greek villages it is considered undesirable for a man to marry an older woman.

5. In one group of twenty-five soldiers from different villages, six reported that there was no promenade in their village, although each of the six knew of its existence elsewhere. The remaining nineteen said that they had the promenade.

6. Matchmakers, the proxenetres, still exist today, according to a clipping from the *Athens News*, November 23, 1952: "Athanasia Markou arranged marriages. That is to say, she was what they call a 'proxenetra.' A short time ago she had as a client one Irene who wanted to get her first cousin, Maria, married. Markou undertook to find a husband, and introduced Irene's cousin Maria to her own brother. The marriage took place, but the agreed fee to the 'proxenetra' was not paid, and Markou tried to dissolve the marriage out of anger."

7. A statement of the connection between dowry practices, attitudes toward land tenure, and the status of a son-in-law living in his wife's paternal home is found in Ernestine Friedl, "Dowry and Inheritance in Modern Greece," *Transactions of the New York Academy of Sciences*, XXII, ser. 2 (November 1959).

8. One important reason why a young woman prefers a shopkeeper or artisan from a town or city is the fact that she will be relieved of the drudgery of farm work.

9. Bardis, "Main Features of the Greek Family," pp. 17, 20.

10. D. Loukopoulos, *Laographia*, XII (1938).

Chapter IX. Ceremonies and Holy Days

1. See D. Loukopoulos, *Laographia*, XII (1938).

2. See William Miller, *Greek Life in Town and Country*, p. 96.

186
3. Miller, *Greek Life*, p. 73, correctly points out that the strong particularism, or local loyalty, found in Greece is often given expression in the local saint's day which heightens clannishness.

4. Agnes Diamantopoulos, "Greek Dances of Today and the Dances of Ancient Greece: A Comparison," *Hellenia*, XXI (January–March 1953), 9. On Easter Tuesday the people of Megara dance the *trata*, an ancient dance depicting the motions of the fishermen hopefully hauling in their nets.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

6. After this material had been written, there appeared a volume in English by George A. Megas under the title *Greek Calendar Customs* (Athens, 1956). It is a valuable source book for anyone wishing to understand the rural customs associated with various holidays. For an interesting description of the holidays in a village of Central Greece, see V. G. Valaoras, *E laographia tou choriou mou: Perista, Navpaktias* (The Folklore of My Village: Perista, Naupaktias) (Thessalonike, 1939).

7. See Anne Anthony, *Meet the Greeks* (Athens, 1950), for an excellent description of holidays of particular interest to the foreigner living in Athens. This small book is a most useful orientation to Greek life.

171
8. These facts about specific holidays are taken from St. P. Kyriakidis, "Erotimata dia ten laiken latreian" (Questions Concerning Popular Worship), *Laographia*, XI (1937), 659–677. Although I have not personally witnessed all of these customs in Greek villages, I have seen almost every one of them observed by other nationalities of the Orthodox faith.

9. For further details about the kallikantzari, see G. F. Abbott, *Macedonian Folk-*

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

peasant farmer who cultivates his land like all his parishioners, and who exercises a ministry which is almost wholly liturgical in character. His ecclesiastical duties are limited in practice to administering the mysteries of baptism and the holy chrism; to marrying and burying, and offering week by week the unbloody sacrifice; to singing the divine office; to memorial services, blessings of homes and crops and sundry other objects, and to an occasional exorcism.

The parish priest *must* be married and at least thirty years of age, and the most that he can hope for in the way of preferment is a slight increase in his basic stipend if he is able to spend a year or two at one of the seminaries (*phrontisteria*) for parish clergy. This basic wage—which is supplemented by fees and offerings in kind, as well as by the fruit of the country parson's agricultural and other labours—is miserable enough. It was only in 1949 raised to 250,000 drachmas (the equivalent of less than six pounds sterling) a month: a pair of boots then cost about 70,000 drachmas and a pig perhaps 300,000. In such circumstances the support of a large family leaves little margin for luxuries, even when harvests are good and life runs smoothly and securely. Unsatisfactory as the economic position of the village *papas* remains, it is considerably better than it was fifty years ago. Until 1909 the parish priest was entirely dependent upon the fees of his parishioners and the labour of his own hands. The provision of a regular stipend—inadequate as this may seem—was only made possible by the creation of a General Ecclesiastical Fund deriving its income from confiscated monastic property and lands; and while the anti-monastic legislation of recent years has aroused considerable resentment among the monks themselves, there can be little doubt that the redistribution of wealth which it has involved has been of incalculable benefit to the Church as a whole.

Even in the towns the scope of the activities of the married clergy is strictly limited. There are a few married priests in Athens engaged in work of a type generally reserved for the monastic clergy; one of them, who presides over the press and information office of the *Apostoliki Diakonia* (the Home Mission of the Church of Greece) and has a son and a daughter who are both students of the theological faculty of the university, bears the title of *protopresbyter*—though this is rare in Greece. There are certain indications that the number of educated married clergy may before very long increase considerably; this has already happened among the Russians of the diaspora and elsewhere in the Orthodox world. It is, of course, from the celibate clergy that the bishops

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

are chosen. Before presenting himself to a bishop the candidate for ordination must decide finally and irrevocably to what state of life he is called, since marriage is not permitted after ordination. This rule, as will appear when we come to consider the training of the Greek clergy, gives rise to many grave practical problems.

Such then, very briefly, is the framework of the diocesan and parochial organisation. The married clergy, "in parishes, residing on their cures", form a distinct class with well-defined duties and limitations peculiar to their condition; while the general administration of the diocese, the ministries of preaching and confessing, together with the organisation of the catechetical schools and Christian Unions which have become so important an element in the pattern of Greek church life within the last few years, are the immediate responsibility of the metropolitan assisted by his headquarters staff of monks and lay theologians.

The Greek bishop is still in a very real sense the *persona* of his diocese: the natural leader of the whole community in matters temporal as well as spiritual. Not for nothing is he commonly referred to as *ὁ Δεσπότης*, 'the Despot'. During the Turkish occupation the power of the bishop within his own diocese was all but unbounded, and as he had formerly mediated between his people and the Turkish authorities so, more recently, it was he who commonly bore the heaviest burden of responsibility during the occupation of Greece by the Axis troops. Archbishop Damaskinos was called to play, on a wider stage and before a larger audience, it is true, a part which was being sustained no less faithfully, albeit more obscurely, by many of his brethren in the provincial towns of Greece during the years from 1941 to 1945. Though times have changed since the day when the people of Salonica overthrew the minarets of the fleeing oppressor with such patriotic and religious ardour that many casualties were caused by the falling masonry, the Greek bishop still maintains a style befitting his position. The metropolis (where it has survived the destruction of the war years) is generally amongst the most impressive and substantial structures of a provincial town, and though the bishop is readily accessible to all and sundry, he nevertheless bears himself with considerable dignity. When he walks abroad, carrying a silver-headed staff and accompanied by a deacon, the people draw aside to let him pass, bowing their heads and putting off their caps. The faithful who come to the metropolis—whether they be peasants from some nearby hamlet or senior army officers from the

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

793 874 only one parish priest from each group of three inhabited villages to be away from his flock at any given time. In such circumstances it was not always possible for a priest to complete the full course at the seminary, and many had to be content with twelve months at Kozani.

Despite all these difficulties, however, the seminary had already, by the spring of 1950, established itself as a real centre of pastoral and liturgical teaching in the dioceses of western Macedonia, and its influence could be detected in several score of parishes dispersed throughout this barren region. In remote hamlets of northern Pindos, [794] catechetical schools were flourishing for the first time under the direction of a priest trained at Kozani. The holy sacrifice was being offered week by week with renewed fervour in many a village church; and there were not a few country parsons (not all of them young men) who had gone back to their parishes after spending two years at the seminary with a quickened realisation of the high dignity of their calling.

Not all the clergy, it is hardly necessary to add, are as yet fully convinced of the utility of the new training school. I well recall meeting one old gentleman who was highly indignant at his metropolitan's suggestion that he might profitably spend a year or two at Kozani, and who maintained with some heat that after thirty-three years in the sacred ministry he could learn only "from the Lord". There has been much hilarity in many a rural tavern that some grave *papas* should have been sent back to school for a couple of years. It will doubtless be a long time before these seminaries for parish clergy (which are still something of an innovation) win universal acceptance and approval, and it would be idle to pretend that they offer a wholly satisfactory solution to the problem of how best to train married priests not ordained till many years after they have completed their ordinary schooling.

The seminaries do, nevertheless, meet an urgent need, and it is to be hoped that they will exert an ever increasing influence upon the country dioceses of Greece, and will send forth into the villages a steady stream of true pastors—men who are not "witty, or learned, or eloquent, but *holy*"—for in Greece, as in other countries, that is perhaps the greatest need of all.

*

[589] As I stressed in an earlier chapter, the Greek clergy fall into two sharply defined categories: on the one hand the married *papades*, on the

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

other the celibate clergy from whose ranks the chief ministers of the Church are normally chosen. In the training of the former book-learning plays but little part. The seminaries aim at providing no more than an elementary grounding in pastoralia for a race of craftsmen and peasant-farmers who, with few exceptions, are more at home with a plough than a pen, and are wholly unequipped for academic pursuits. The higher clergy, however, are almost invariably graduates, well versed in the disputations of the schools.

While the married clergy receive their training in the seminaries, the potential bishop is fashioned in the theological schools of the universities of Athens and Salonica. The theological faculty of the northern university was established only a few years ago. In former days many of the higher Greek clergy went to the theological academy at Halki, near Constantinople: a celebrated institution which, in the days of its prosperity, attracted students from every part of the Orthodox world. After the first world war, however, this sank to the level of a provincial seminary, and it is only in recent years (under the guiding hand of a new Oecumenical Patriarch) that it has regained something of its old prestige. Thus, the great majority of the present Greek bishops and archimandrites are graduates of the University of Athens.

In considering the place occupied by the theological schools of the universities within the framework of training for the ministry, it must not be forgotten that the clergy account for only a small proportion of the students of these faculties, far the greater number of whom are lay men and women (there are quite a few girls amongst the theological students of Athens and Salonica, and their number is steadily increasing). In the universities, moreover, as in the seminaries and the ecclesiastical schools, the majority of the teaching staff are laymen. The only cleric among the Athens professors—the Archimandrite B. Stephanides (whose *Ecclesiastical History* seems likely to be a standard work for every Greek student for many years to come)—retired in 1950 and was succeeded by a layman; while at Salonica likewise, only the professor of ecclesiastical history—an archimandrite who was formerly in charge of the Greek church in Paris—is in orders. Although the lay theologian has a long and distinguished ancestry in eastern Christendom and is often a man of deep spirituality, it can nevertheless be a trifle startling to hear a layman lecturing, to an audience which includes experienced priests and *pneumatikoi*, on the mystery of confession.

The university course normally lasts four years. The theology of the

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

riages. Until the means for living respectably can be assured, the families of Nea Eleftherohori are no longer willing to allow their children to marry, nor do the children themselves wish it. In 1956, a young man who would inherit a farm of 27 stremmata expected his bride to bring with her a dowry of about 300 gold pounds. This is a truly extraordinary figure for any family in the village to raise, equal to $3,000 in American currency and considerably more in local purchasing power. Ten or fifteen years of strenuous saving are required to accumulate so much, all the more since appearances have to be maintained in the meantime, and this takes money too. Consequently, a good many men and women in their thirties and some in their early forties remain unmarried.

Once again, a partial exception must be made for the refugees, among whom the dowry system is not so universal and binding as among the old settlers, and who still sometimes marry young and before the new family has any assured means of support. But the dowry system is said to be spreading among them too; and the disdain (mingled perhaps with a certain envy) with which the old settlers speak of the refugees' irresponsible marriages makes it clear that the strongest sort of social pressure is at work to prevent such occurrences.

Apparently the people of Nea Eleftherohori are making use of an old custom, the dowry, to regulate population growth. Quite consciously and deliberately, they seek to keep their numbers within the limits imposed by their economic position; or, to put it the other way around, the villagers are determined not to sink into poverty, or to allow their children to do so; and by postponing marriages they know they can avoid the disaster of having too many mouths to feed.

The birth records of the village show what has been accomplished in this direction. Before 1939 the number of births annually recorded never sank below 42, and went as high as 77

accepted without complaint when necessary, as a hardship to be borne with fortitude. Sisters like to share a room, and even a bed; mothers like to work with their daughters, whom they do not consider to be underfoot. It is not contrary to peasant ethics for children of mixed sex to share sleeping quarters. Family matters are discussed by all, and children over 10 often have a voice in important decisions such as the buying or selling of a field.

Greeks value freedom and self-dependence, but the unit of self-dependence is not the individual but the family. The family is an organic whole, a system of delicately balanced roles and interrelationships. Older siblings are responsible for younger siblings, males for females. A Greek never ceases to have a claim on his family; a married son or daughter cannot be poor, starting at the bottom of the financial scale, while the parents thrive financially. A married son asks his father for help in business without losing *philotimo* or becoming dependent in character. A daughter asks for the things she cannot afford to buy. This is not dependence, it is one's rightful place within a structured, balanced whole. There is no virtue in being self-dependent in relation to one's family. But the family must be self-dependent in relation to the world, except in so far as it has a claim on government aid.

Equality within the family is a matter of personal essence, not of fairness of apportionment. An uneducated older brother is proud without bitterness of the younger brother whom he helped make a doctor. The family may impoverish itself for the education or dowering of one of the children, and the successful life of these children brings honour to the whole family. It is not uncommon to find that a man has remained unmarried so as to support his widowed sister and her family, or in order to earn a dowry for a large number of sisters. The need for obtaining these dowries was one of the main incentives for emigration to the United States. The responsibility for younger relatives is also at the base of the apportionment of positions and appointments of people who are not fitted by training or deserving by merit. A man who has been educated by older brothers who have stayed in the village working in the fields and vineyards, and who now holds a high government position, owes it to his family and to his role within it to find positions for his nephews. If he does not, he fails his family, he does not uphold the family *philotimo*, he is not a good Greek.

On the other hand, a father does try to see to it that he gives some property to every child, to sons for farming, to daughters for a dowry. This is at the base of much of the agricultural difficulty facing Greece at present, since fields have been divided, often into strips measuring a fraction of an acre, and require consolidation before effective use of mechanized farm implements can be made, as well as for contour farming and efficient fertilization.